MARVEL
036
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STAR WARS
Mayhew

REVENGE OF THE ASTROMECH

It is a time of turmoil in the galaxy. While the evil Galactic Empire remains strong, the Rebel Alliance continues to undermine Imperial forces throughout the galaxy in their fight for freedom.

An Imperial siege on Tureen VII compelled Alliance heroes Luke Skywalker, Princess Leia, and Han Solo, to intervene. Darth Vader dispatched Scar Squadron, an elite group of stormtroopers, to stop them. Although humiliated and disgraced when the rebel forces were able to break the siege, Scar Squadron did not emerge empty handed–they captured C-3PO.

Scar Squadron has turned their focus to extracting as many rebel secrets as possible from the protocol droid. Meanwhile, R2-D2, concerned for his fellow droid and friend, has abandoned the rest of the rebel force in order to launch a solo rescue mission....

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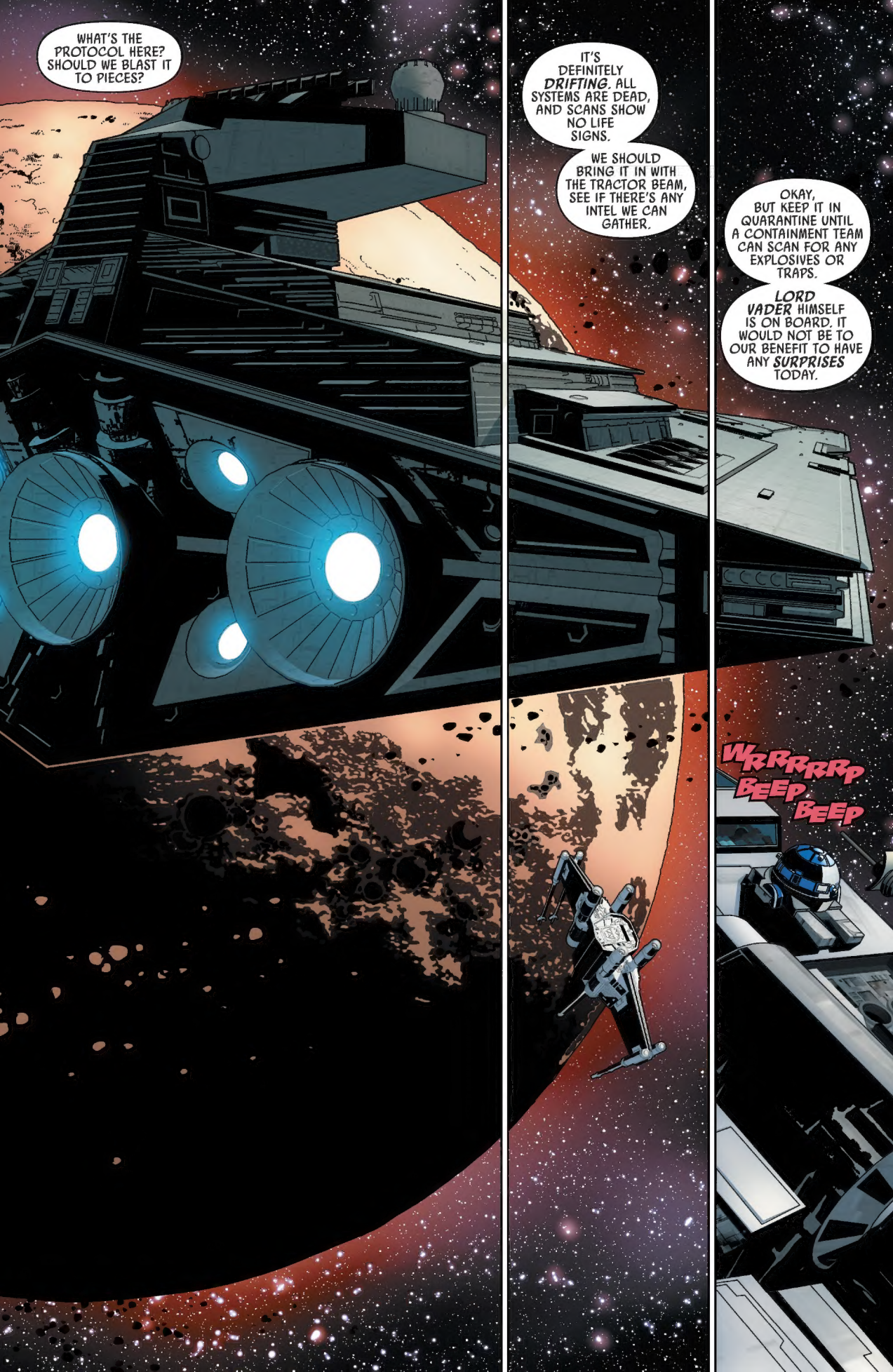
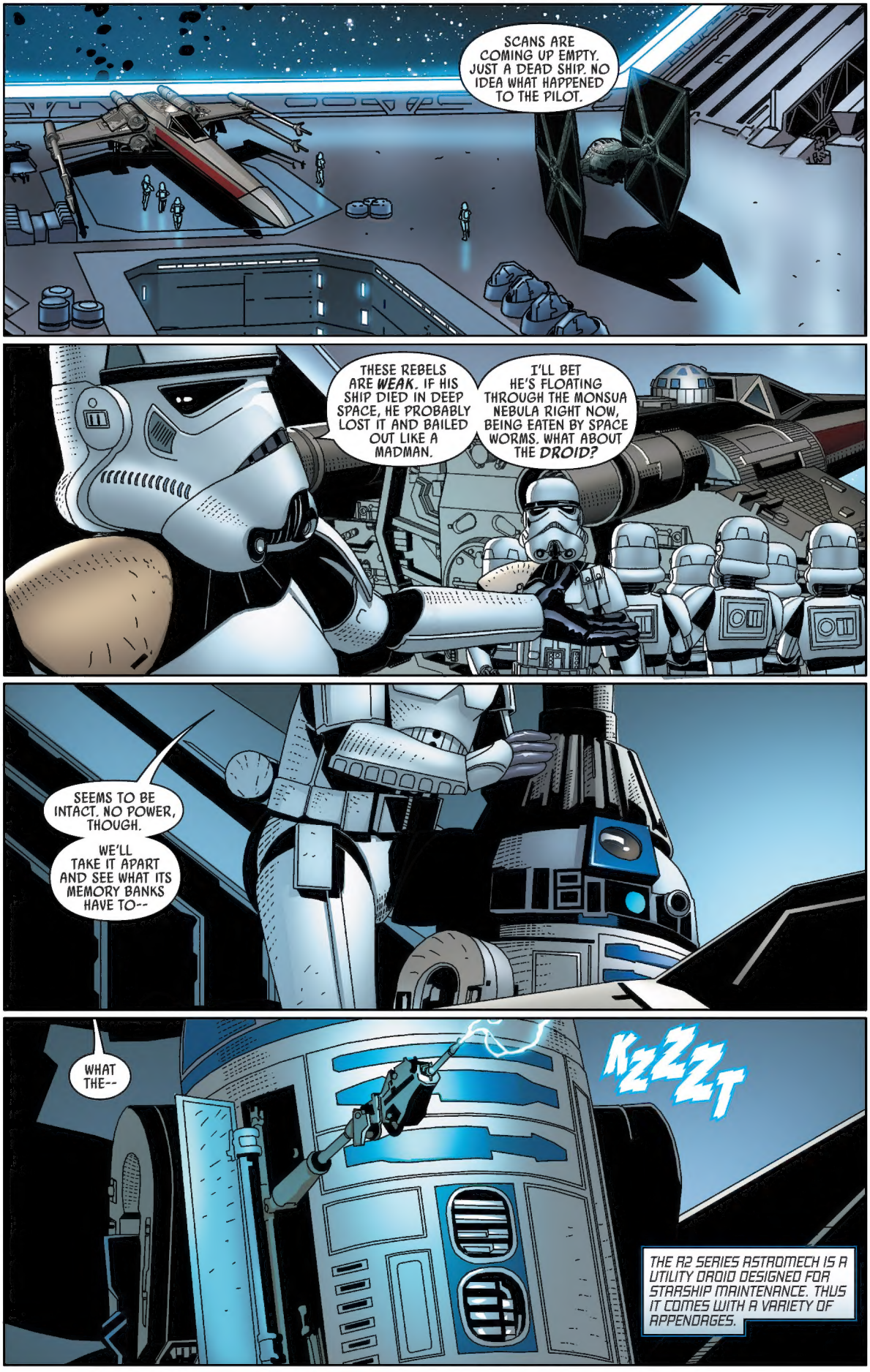
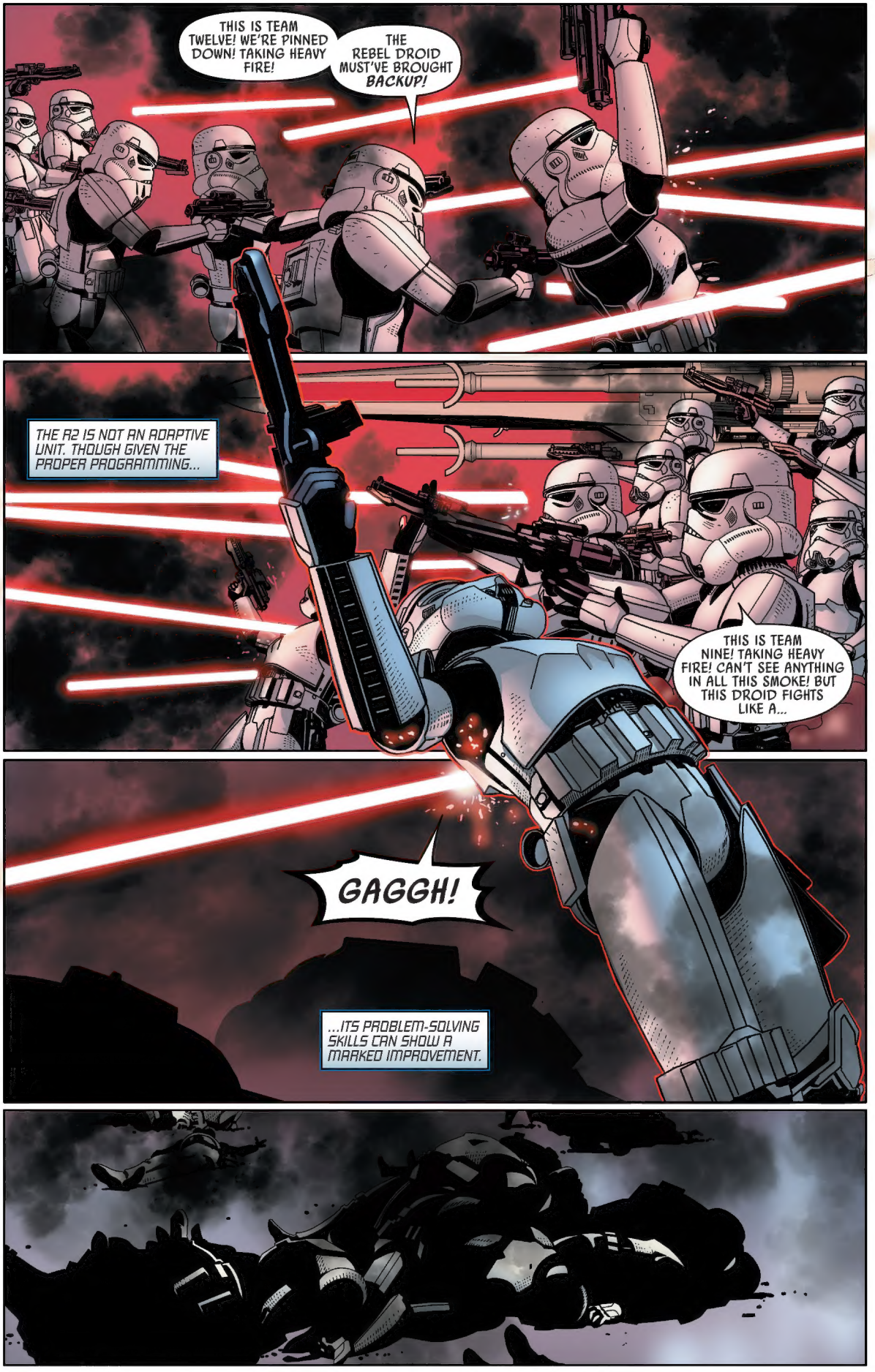

WHAT'S THE PROTOCOL HERE? SHOULD WE BLAST IT TO PIECES?
IT'S DEFINITELY *DRIFTING*. ALL SYSTEMS ARE DEAD, AND SCANS SHOW NO LIFE SIGNS.
WE SHOULD BRING IT IN WITH THE TRACTOR BEAM, SEE IF THERE'S ANY INTEL WE CAN GATHER.
OKAY, BUT KEEP IT IN QUARANTINE UNTIL A CONTAINMENT TEAM CAN SCAN FOR ANY EXPLOSIVES OR TRAPS.
LORD VADER HIMSELF IS ON BOARD. IT WOULD NOT BE TO OUR BENEFIT TO HAVE ANY *SURPRISES* TODAY.
WRRRRRRP
BEEP
BEEP

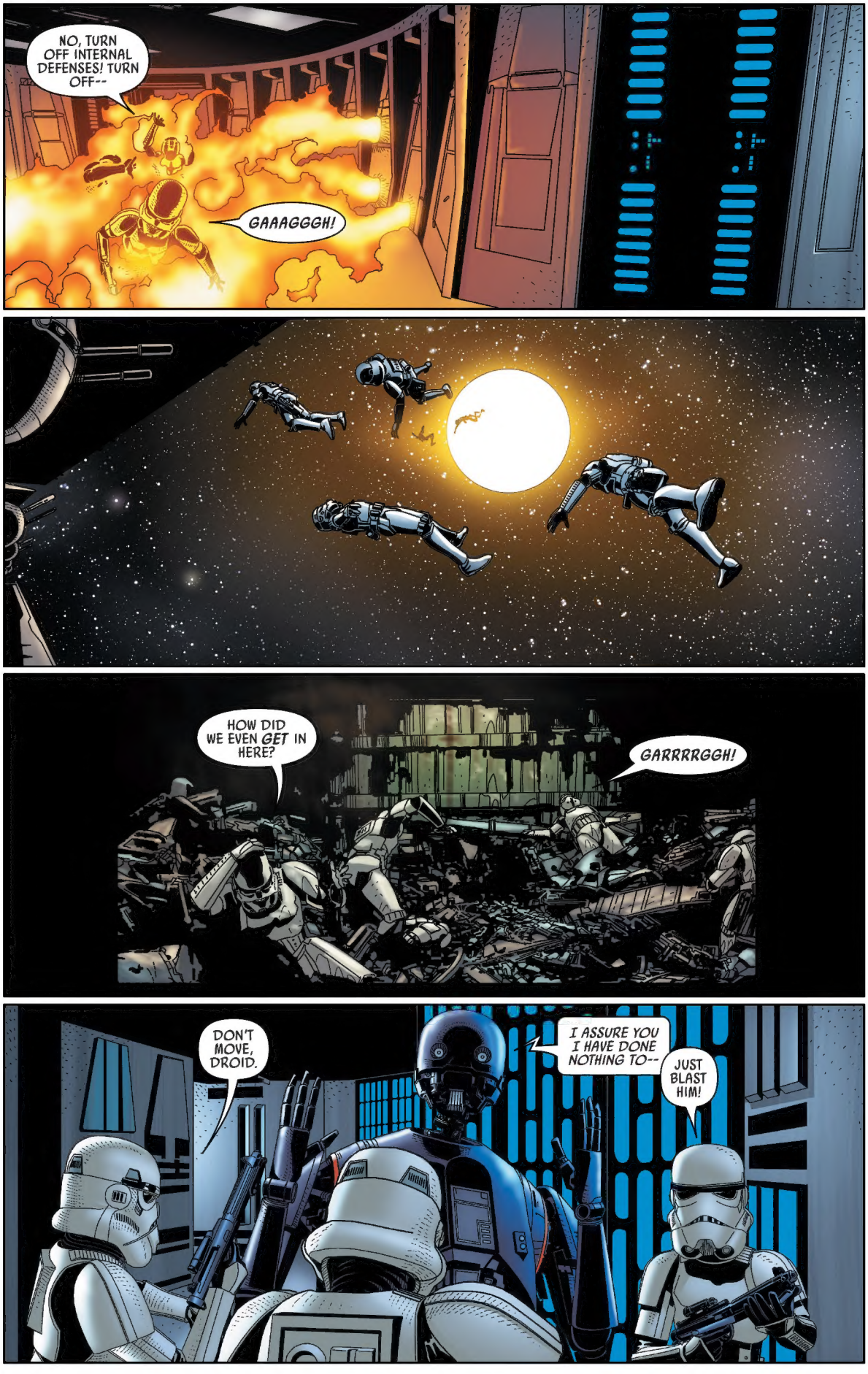

SCANS ARE COMING UP EMPTY. JUST A DEAD SHIP. NO IDEA WHAT HAPPENED TO THE PILOT.
THESE REBELS ARE WEAK. IF HIS SHIP DIED IN DEEP SPACE, HE PROBABLY LOST IT AND BAILED OUT LIKE A MADMAN.
I'LL BET HE'S FLOATING THROUGH THE MONSUA NEBULA RIGHT NOW, BEING EATEN BY SPACE WORMS. WHAT ABOUT THE DROID?
SEEMS TO BE INTACT. NO POWER, THOUGH.
WE'LL TAKE IT APART AND SEE WHAT ITS MEMORY BANKS HAVE TO--
WHAT THE--
KZZZT
THE R2 SERIES ASTROMECH IS A UTILITY DROID DESIGNED FOR STARSHIP MAINTENANCE. THUS IT COMES WITH A VARIETY OF APPENDAGES.

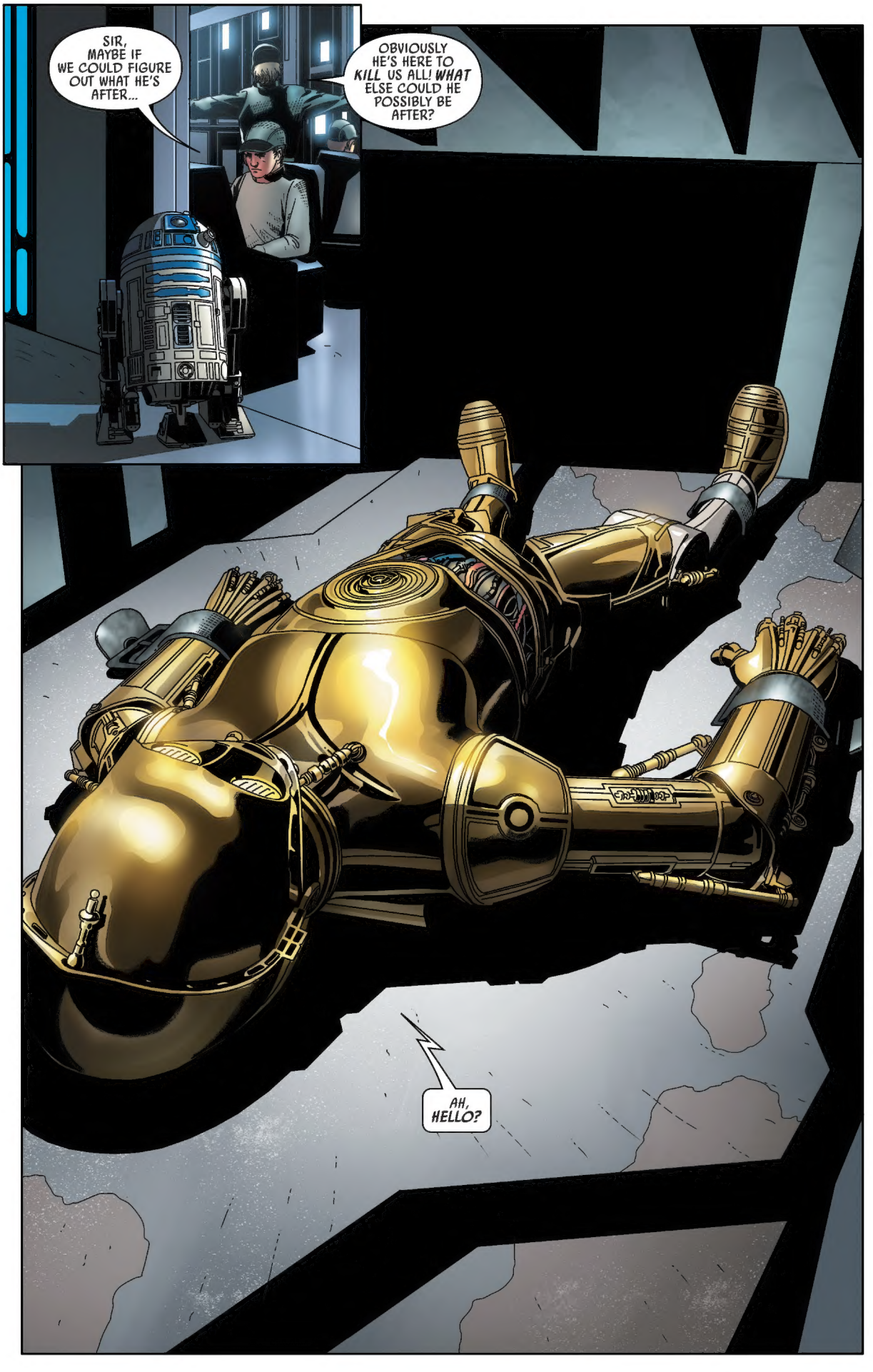
AARRRGGH!
CONTAINMENT TEAM? WE DIDN'T COPY THAT. SAY AGAIN?
THE R2'S PROTOCOLS ARE ALL GEARED TOWARD REPAIR AND NAVIGATIONAL ASSISTANCE.
SOUNDED ALMOST LIKE... SOMEBODY SCREAMING.
CONTAINMENT TEAM?
WHAT'S HAPPENING HERE?
THE TEAM IN THE HANGAR-- WE'VE LOST THEM, SIR.
WHAT WAS THE LAST THING THEY SAID? SOMETHING ABOUT...A DROID?
YOU'RE TELLING ME A DROID JUST TOOK DOWN OUR CONTAINMENT TEAM? GET MORE TROOPS DOWN THERE AT ONCE.
"AND TELL THEM TO BE ON THE LOOKOUT FOR THE BIGGEST, NASTIEST DROID THEY'VE EVER SEEN."
ITS DEFENSE CAPABILITIES ARE NON-EXISTENT.
BUDDA BUDDA THWRRK

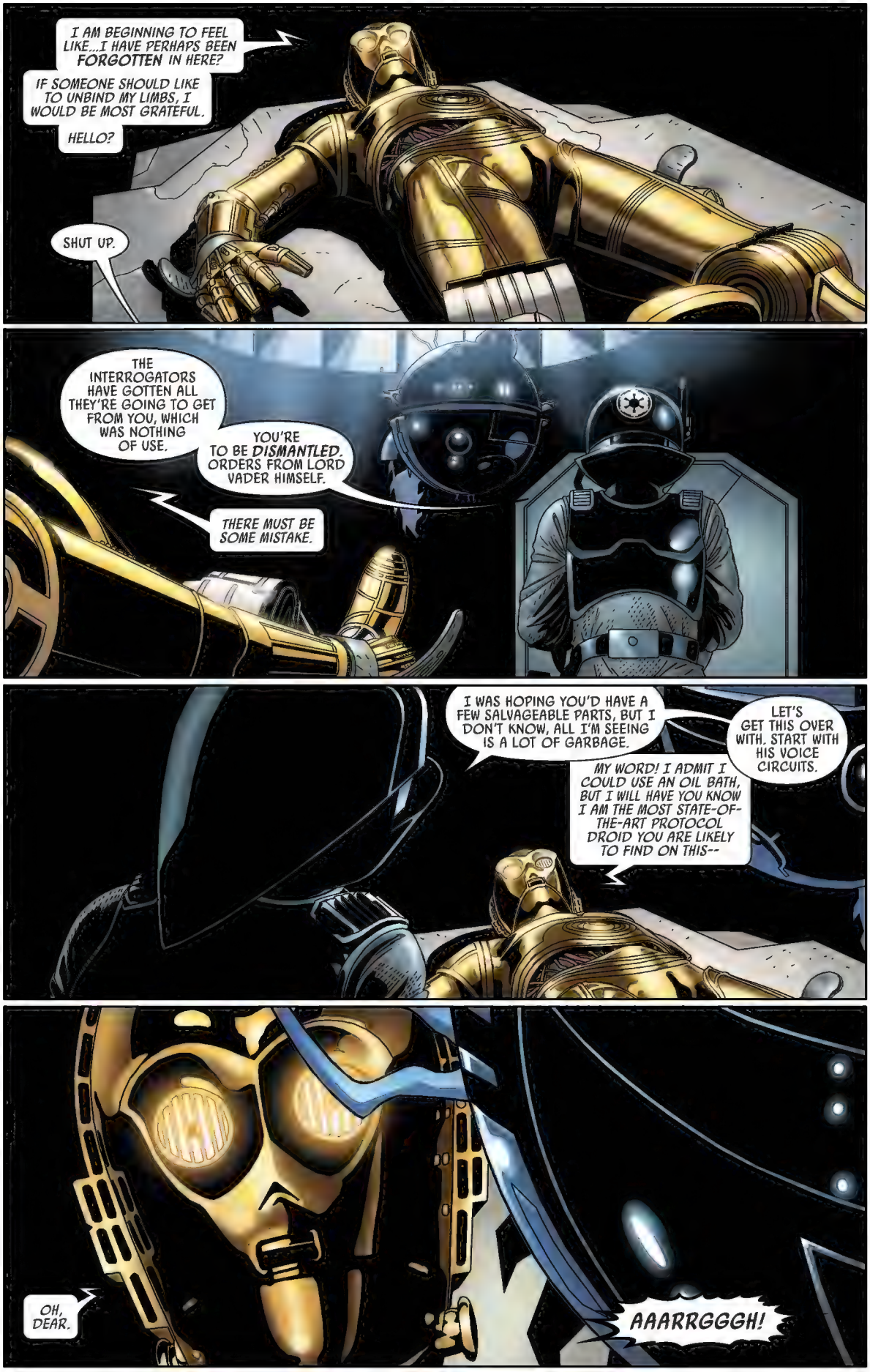
THIS WAY! SECURE THE HANGAR!
BWOOP WOOBEEP WURUUU
GIVEN LIMITED UPGRADES, THE R2 ASTROMECH CAN ALSO BE QUITE ADEPT AT INTERFACING WITH OTHER COMPUTERS...
UH, SIR... THERE NOW SEEMS TO BE A SECOND TEAM RESPONDING TO THE HANGAR.
WHAT? I DIDN'T ORDER THAT.
AND WE'VE ALSO JUST LOST CONTACT WITH THE FIRST RESPONSE TEAM.
WHAT IN THE NAME OF THE EMPEROR IS GOING ON?
BEEBOO WEEHOOOO
...THOUGH THE R2 UNIT DOES NOT POSSESS THE PROCESSING POWER TO EFFECTIVELY COMMUNICATE WITH THE MOST SOPHISTICATED STARSHIP COMPUTERS.

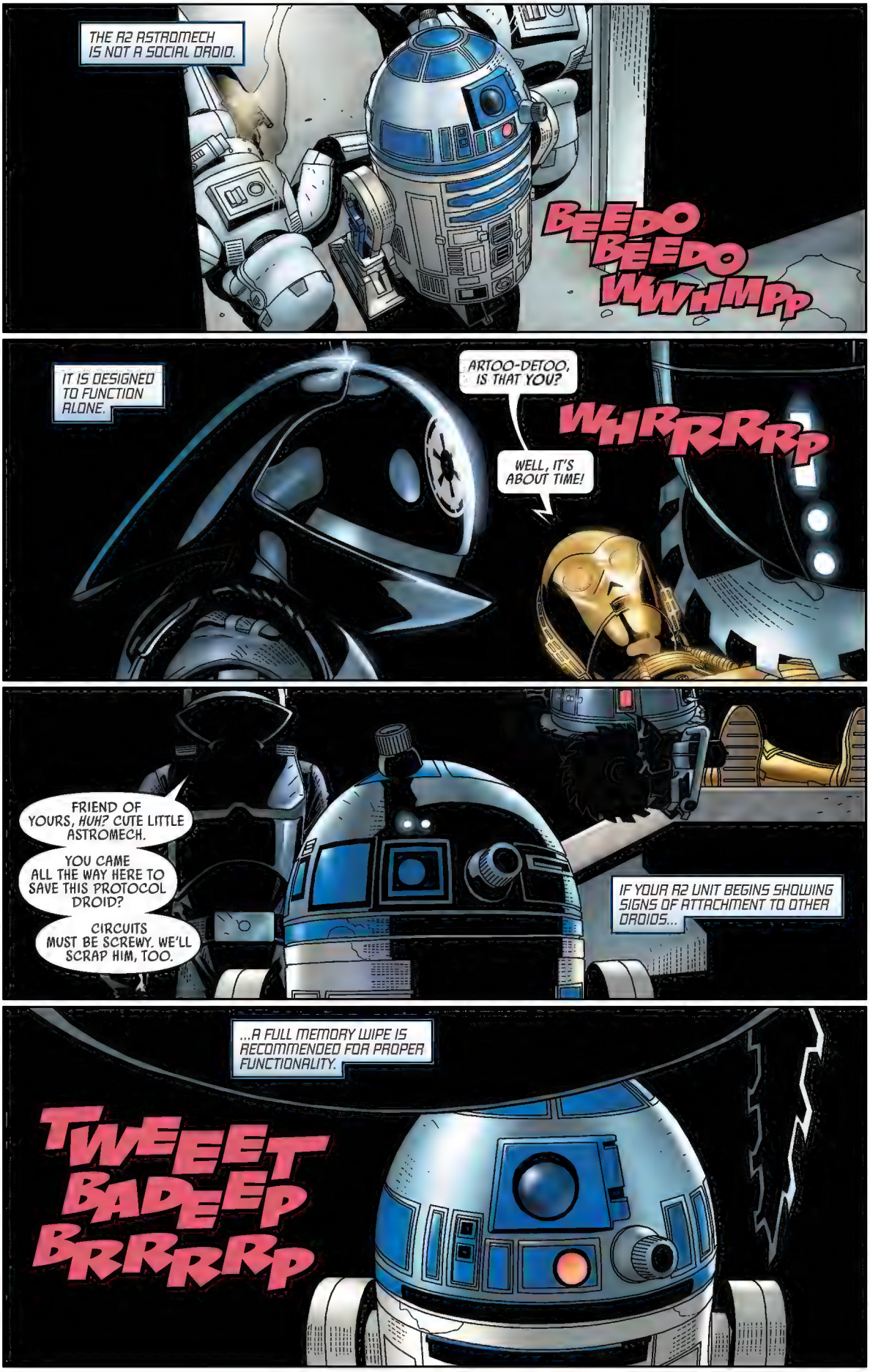

THIS IS TEAM TWELVE! WE'RE PINNED DOWN! TAKING HEAVY FIRE!
THE REBEL DROID MUST'VE BROUGHT BACKUP!
THE R2 IS NOT AN ADAPTIVE UNIT. THOUGH GIVEN THE PROPER PROGRAMMING...
THIS IS TEAM NINE! TAKING HEAVY FIRE! CAN'T SEE ANYTHING IN ALL THIS SMOKE! BUT THIS DROID FIGHTS LIKE A...
GAGGH!
...ITS PROBLEM-SOLVING SKILLS CAN SHOW A MARKED IMPROVEMENT.

BOTH TEAMS ARE DOWN.
PERHAPS... WE SHOULD ALERT LORD VADER.
BITE YOUR TONGUE. SEND FIVE MORE SQUADS!
AND FIND THAT DROID!
SIR, RESPONDING TROOPS ARE BEING REROUTED ALL OVER THE SHIP!
HOW IS HE DOING THIS?
BWOOP BWOOP EEP


NO, TURN OFF INTERNAL DEFENSES! TURN OFF--
GAAAGGGH!
HOW DID WE EVEN GET IN HERE?
GARRRRGGH!
DON'T MOVE, DROID.
I ASSURE YOU I HAVE DONE NOTHING TO--
JUST BLAST HIM!

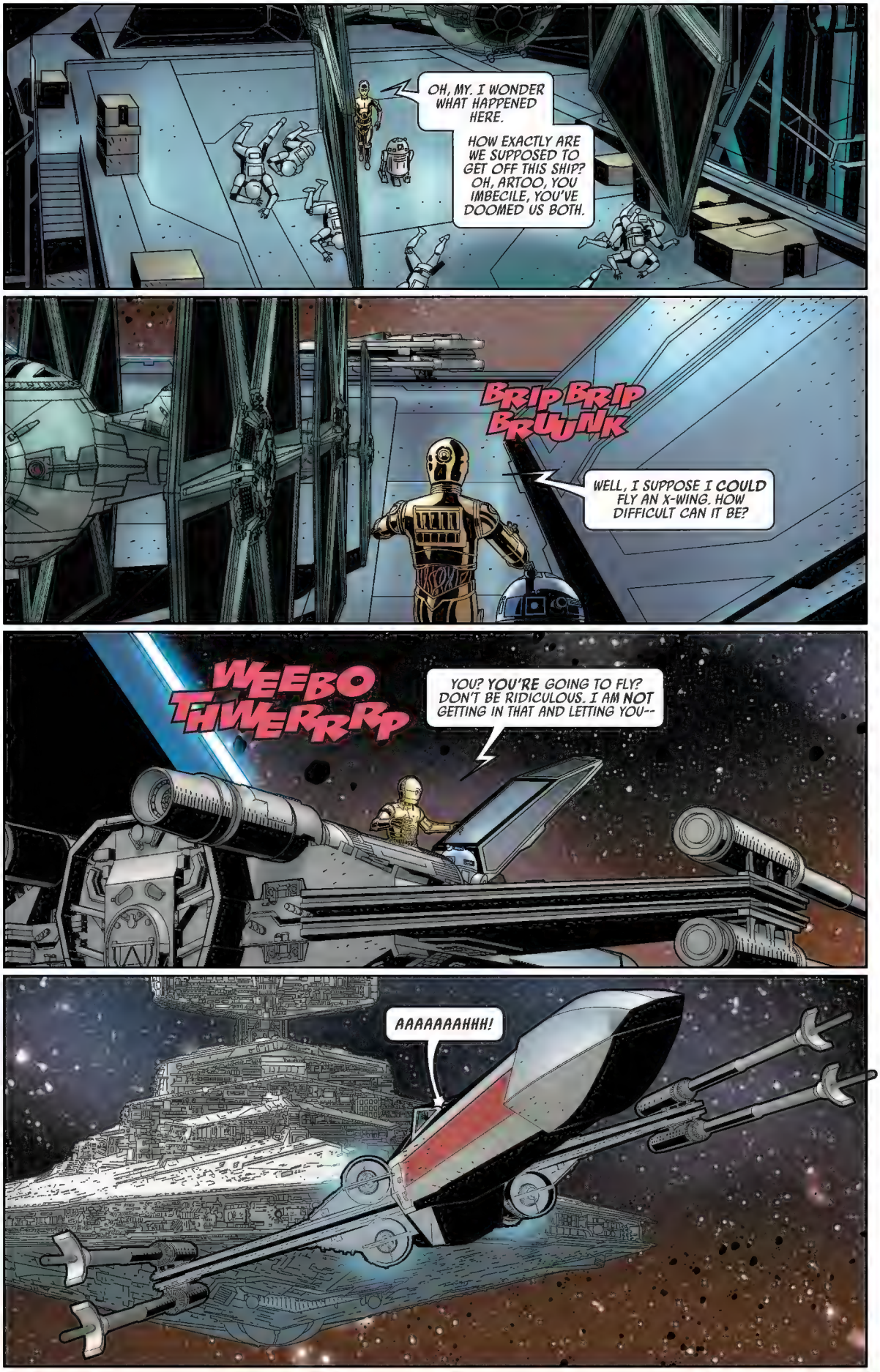

SIR, MAYBE IF WE COULD FIGURE OUT WHAT HE'S AFTER...
OBVIOUSLY HE'S HERE TO *KILL* US ALL! *WHAT* ELSE COULD HE POSSIBLY BE AFTER?
AH, HELLO?


I AM BEGINNING TO FEEL LIKE...I HAVE PERHAPS BEEN FORGOTTEN IN HERE?
IF SOMEONE SHOULD LIKE TO UNBIND MY LIMBS, I WOULD BE MOST GRATEFUL.
HELLO?
SHUT UP.
THE INTERROGATORS HAVE GOTTEN ALL THEY'RE GOING TO GET FROM YOU, WHICH WAS NOTHING OF USE.
YOU'RE TO BE DISMANTLED. ORDERS FROM LORD VADER HIMSELF.
THERE MUST BE SOME MISTAKE.
I WAS HOPING YOU'D HAVE A FEW SALVAGEABLE PARTS, BUT I DON'T KNOW, ALL I'M SEEING IS A LOT OF GARBAGE.
LET'S GET THIS OVER WITH. START WITH HIS VOICE CIRCUITS.
MY WORD! I ADMIT I COULD USE AN OIL BATH, BUT I WILL HAVE YOU KNOW I AM THE MOST STATE-OF-THE-ART PROTOCOL DROID YOU ARE LIKELY TO FIND ON THIS--
OH, DEAR.
AAARRGGGH!


THE R2 ASTROMECH IS NOT A SOCIAL DROID.
BEEDO BEEDO WWHMPP
IT IS DESIGNED TO FUNCTION ALONE.
ARTOO-DETOO, IS THAT YOU?
WHRRRRRRP
WELL, IT'S ABOUT TIME!
FRIEND OF YOURS, HUH? CUTE LITTLE ASTROMECH.
YOU CAME ALL THE WAY HERE TO SAVE THIS PROTOCOL DROID?
CIRCUITS MUST BE SCREWY. WE'LL SCRAP HIM, TOO.
IF YOUR R2 UNIT BEGINS SHOWING SIGNS OF ATTACHMENT TO OTHER DROIDS...
...A FULL MEMORY WIPE IS RECOMMENDED FOR PROPER FUNCTIONALITY.
TWEEET BADEEP BRRRRRP

WHAT DO YOU MEAN, YOU HAD CHEWBACCA UPGRADE YOUR WEAPONS SYSTEM?
FUNNELING THAT MUCH POWER TO YOUR ELECTROSHOCK PROD WILL DRAIN YOUR BATTERIES IN NO TIME, YOU IGNORANT RUST BUCKET.
OH, HOWEVER DID YOU SURVIVE SO LONG WITHOUT ME?
REPORT JUST CAME FROM THE BRIG! WE'VE GOT THE RENEGADE DROID CORNERED! ALL TROOPS CONVERGE ON LEVEL D!
MOVE! OUT OF THE WAY!
THEY MUST KNOW THAT I'VE ESCAPED. I'M QUITE THE IMPORTANT PRISONER HERE, YOU KNOW.
WHERE ARE THE REST OF THE REBELS? HAVE THEY SENT THE ENTIRE FLEET TO RESCUE ME?
BEEP BEEBO WHIRP
JUST YOU? WELL, THAT'S LUDICROUS!
OH, I'M GOING TO HAVE TO DO THIS MYSELF, AREN'T I?

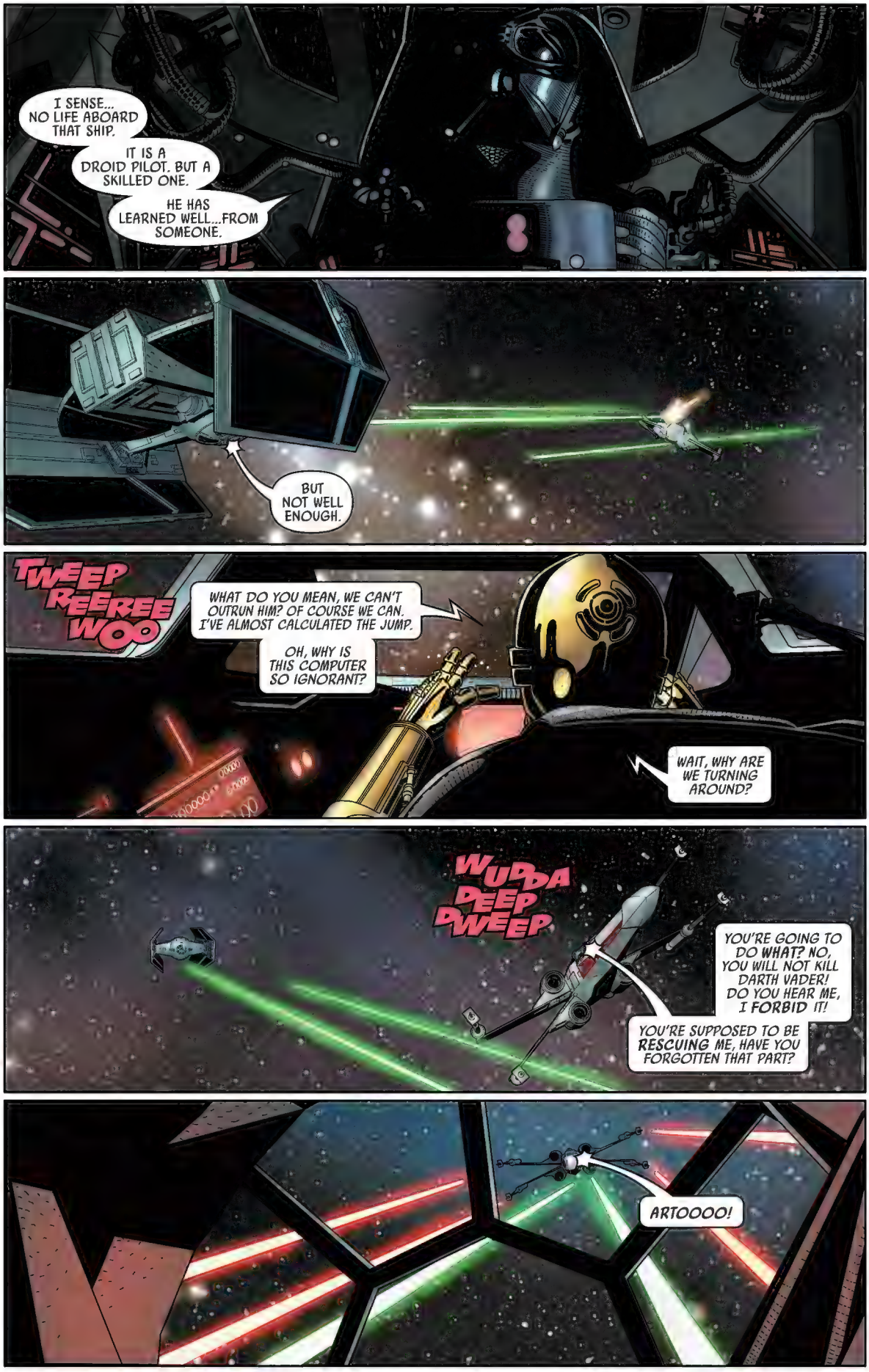
CEASE FIRE!
THE DROID AND HIS BACKUP ARE DOWN. LOOKS LIKE IT WAS AN *INSIDE* JOB. I REPEAT...
WE GOT THEM.


OH, MY. I WONDER WHAT HAPPENED HERE.
HOW EXACTLY ARE WE SUPPOSED TO GET OFF THIS SHIP? OH, ARTOO, YOU IMBECILE, YOU'VE DOOMED US BOTH.
BRIP BRIP BRUUNK
WELL, I SUPPOSE I COULD FLY AN X-WING. HOW DIFFICULT CAN IT BE?
WEEBO THWERRRRP
YOU? YOU'RE GOING TO FLY? DON'T BE RIDICULOUS. I AM NOT GETTING IN THAT AND LETTING YOU--
AAAAAAAHHH!

THE R2 IS A REPAIR AND NAVIGATIONAL DROID. IT CANNOT PERFORM FULL PILOT FUNCTIONS.
AGGGH! SLOW DOWN, ARTOO! HAVE YOU LOST YOUR CIRCUITS? YOU'RE GOING TO GET US BOTH--
SIR, THE X-WING'S TRYING TO ESCAPE. THE INFILTRATOR MUST STILL BE ALIVE.
ACTIVATING TRACTOR BEAM BEFORE THEY CAN MAKE THE JUMP TO HYPERSPACE.
NEVER MIND THAT! WHOEVER'S IN THAT SHIP HAS JUST TAKEN OUT TWO DOZEN TROOPS!
"JUST BLAST THEM TO HELL!"
WE CAN'T GET A LOCK ON THEM, SIR.
THIS IS A HIGHLY SKILLED PILOT WE'RE DEALING WITH HERE. IT MUST BE SOME SORT OF REBEL MASTER SPY.
WE'VE GOT TO KILL HIM BEFORE LORD VADER HEARS OF--
HEARS OF WHAT?

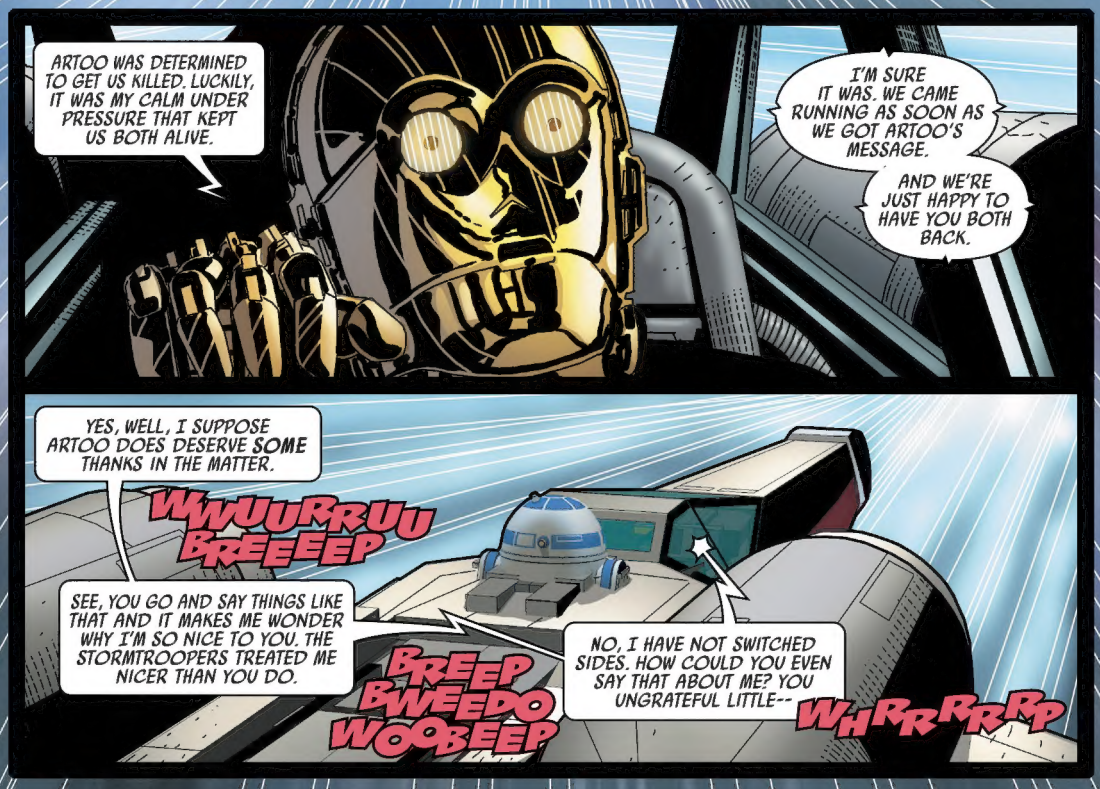
YOUR INCOMPETENCE, CAPTAIN?
TOO LATE FOR THAT.
HGGGHK.
THE REBEL INFILTRATOR... WHAT WAS HE AFTER?
MY LORD, AS FAR AS WE CAN TELL...IT WAS NOTHING BUT A DROID.
THEN WE WANT THAT DROID.
KEEP THEM CONTAINED, BUT DO NOT DESTROY THAT SHIP.
"I'LL BRING THEM DOWN MYSELF."

BEEDA TWIP BWOOP
ME? YOU WANT ME TO CALCULATE THE JUMP TO HYPERSPACE? ISN'T THAT YOUR JOB? I'VE NEVER--
BWOOP EEP WOOOO
"BUSY KEEPING US ALIVE"? OH, YOU POMPOUS GEAR SACK. YOU CALCULATE THE JUMP, AND I'LL FLY THE SHIP. IF YOU CAN DO IT, HOW HARD CAN IT--
VWEE BWOOP BIP
VADER? DID YOU SAY DARTH VADER IS CHASING US?
ON SECOND THOUGHT... YOU FLY THE SHIP, ARTOO.


I SENSE... NO LIFE ABOARD THAT SHIP.
IT IS A DROID PILOT. BUT A SKILLED ONE.
HE HAS LEARNED WELL...FROM SOMEONE.
BUT NOT WELL ENOUGH.
TWEEP REEREE WOO
WHAT DO YOU MEAN, WE CAN'T OUTRUN HIM? OF COURSE WE CAN. I'VE ALMOST CALCULATED THE JUMP.
OH, WHY IS THIS COMPUTER SO IGNORANT?
WAIT, WHY ARE WE TURNING AROUND?
WUDDA DEEP DWEEP
YOU'RE GOING TO DO WHAT? NO, YOU WILL NOT KILL DARTH VADER! DO YOU HEAR ME, I FORBID IT!
YOU'RE SUPPOSED TO BE RESCUING ME, HAVE YOU FORGOTTEN THAT PART?
ARTOOOO!

LORD VADER, LOOK OUT, THERE'S--
GAGGGH!
SHOOTING VADER IN THE BACK NEVER GETS OLD.
THAT'S THEM! THAT'S ARTOO'S SHIP!
THEN LET'S GET OUTTA HERE, LUKE, BEFORE THAT DESTROYER DRAGS US ALL IN.
COPY THAT, HAN.
ARTOO, JUMP TO THESE COORDINATES! DO IT NOW!

HA HA!
ARTOO, THREEPIO, YOU'RE BOTH OKAY?
OH, THANK THE STARS, MASTER LUKE.
IF PROPERLY MAINTAINED, YOUR R2 UNIT CAN PERFORM SATISFACTORILY FOR A NUMBER OF YEARS.
THOUGH IT IS BEST TO HAVE REALISTIC EXPECTATIONS OF ITS CAPABILITIES.


ARTOO WAS DETERMINED TO GET US KILLED. LUCKILY, IT WAS MY CALM UNDER PRESSURE THAT KEPT US BOTH ALIVE.
I'M SURE IT WAS. WE CAME RUNNING AS SOON AS WE GOT ARTOO'S MESSAGE.
AND WE'RE JUST HAPPY TO HAVE YOU BOTH BACK.
YES, WELL, I SUPPOSE ARTOO DOES DESERVE SOME THANKS IN THE MATTER.
WWUURRUU BREEEEP
SEE, YOU GO AND SAY THINGS LIKE THAT AND IT MAKES ME WONDER WHY I'M SO NICE TO YOU. THE STORMTROOPERS TREATED ME NICER THAN YOU DO.
BREEP BWEEDO WOOBEEP
NO, I HAVE NOT SWITCHED SIDES. HOW COULD YOU EVEN SAY THAT ABOUT ME? YOU UNGRATEFUL LITTLE--
WHRRRRRRRP

"WE FOUND IT. IT'S DEFINITELY A REBEL OUTPOST."
AND THEY HAVE NO IDEA WE'RE COMING.
THEN LOCK AND LOAD, SCAR SQUADRON.
AND LET'S GET DOWN THERE AND FIND SOME HELL THAT NEEDS RAISING.

STAR WARS™
NEXT ISSUE:

Tour
THE SEVEN SEAS
With
BLACK MANTA
EMPIRE
Call 555-FISH